

The Duty of Doing Good recommended and press'd.

In A
S E R M O N
P R E A C H ' D
March 30th 1711. Being Good-Friday,
IN THE
Parish-Church
OF
St. Michael le BELFREYS,
IN THE
City of York;
Upon Occasion of the
Charity-Schools.

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G A L. vi. 10.

As we have therefore Opportunity, let us do good unto all Men; especially unto them who are of the Household of Faith.

IN which Words, we may take notice of these following Particulars,

I. A Duty injoin'd, *Let us do Good.*

II. The general Object of this Duty, *All Men.*

III. The especial Object of this Duty, or those, whom in a peculiar manner, we are to regard and prefer to all others in the Exercise of this Duty, and they are those, *Who are of the Household of Faith.*

IV. The time and season of performing and exercising this Duty, and that is, *As we have Opportunity.* I shall briefly run over these Particulars, that I may more largely Discourse on the Subject which has brought us here together.

I. A Duty injoin'd, *Let us do Good.* The Nature of every Being is the just Measure and Standard of what is good to it; for every thing is so far good to another, as it is conformable to its Nature, and has an Aptitude and Tendency to promote the Safety and Prosperity of it. And on the contrary, Every thing is so far Evil to another, as it is repugnant and contrary to its Nature, and works its Harm or Destruction. And therefore, that is good to Man, which is any ways useful and profitable to his Nature; which contributes to his Well-being; which is a fit and proper Means to promote the Ease, the Comfort, the Happiness of his Life. And accordingly, *Doing Good* to one, signifies the doing that which is Useful and Advantageous to him, to whom it is done; and which in itself, or in its effects, ministers to his Happiness.

Now the Duty of *Doing Good*, in the utmost Extent of its Meaning and Obligation, is a large and comprehensive Duty, and implies all those ways whereby we can be helpful and subservient to the Interests of one another: It is not limited and restrained to this or that particular kind or instance of Beneficence;

cence; but includes in its Nature all the ways and means which are in our Power of being Serviceable and Beneficial to others. It has respect to Mens Souls and Spiritual Estate, as well as to their Bodies and Temporary Concernments: The Ignorance of our Brethrens Souls, as well as the Nakedness of their Bodies; the Errors, the Follies, the Vices, and Passions of the one, as well as the Hunger, the Thirst, the Diseases, the Afflictions of the other; call upon us to the practice of this Duty, by administering Relief to the Necessities of both, according to our respective Abilities, and the order and Station which the Providence of God has plac'd us in.

And indeed, if the Nature of Man is the true Measure and Standard of what is good to him, then we can never more properly be said to do good to others, as when we do good to their Souls: For though Man is compounded of Body, as well as Soul, yet his Soul is the most Noble and most Essential Part of his Nature; for by this he is distinguish'd from brute Creatures, and plac'd in a Rank and Order superior to them; by this he is made capable of Eternal Life, and of Joys or Torments equal to the Duration of that Life: So that, tho' we really do good to Men, when we supply the Wants and Indigences of their Bodies; yet we do more good to them, when we Minister to the Needs and Necessities of their Souls: For any good which we do their Souls, is of a more exalted Nature and useful Quality, than that which we do to their Bodies; and as far exceeds it in worth and value, as the Soul excels the Body in the Perfections of its Nature, and the Dignity of its Being.

II. The general Object of this Duty, *All Men, Let us do Good unto all Men.* There is scarce any thing, which more distinguisheth true Christianity from all other Religions whatsoever, than its Rules and Precepts of universal Charity, and universal Beneficence: In these it exceeds the Dictates of Nature, the Institutions of Philosophy, and even the Laws and Precepts of the Mosaical Revelation: For whereas these limited and confin'd our Love to our Relations and Kindred, to our Friends and Allies, to those who were Members of the same civil Community, or of the same Religious Society with our selves; the Christian Religion extends our Love to all Mankind, and makes every Man, under what Consideration soever, the proper Object of it; no distance of Countrey, no difference in Religion, no aversion or spite to our Persons, no

enmity to our God, or our selves, can justify our hatred or our not loving them: As they are Men, we must love them, and do good unto them, because as they are Men, they are our Brethren, proceeding Originally from the same stock and common Parent, and bearing the Image and Similitude of God upon them.

III. The especial Objects of this Duty of *Doing Good*, and they are those, *Who are of the Household of Faith*. Now by these are meant all true and sincere Christians, who profess the Doctrine, and live up to the Laws of the Holy JESUS. And the reason why we must have an especial Regard to these before all others, in our charitable Ministrations and Assurances, is this, *viz.* Because we are Allied to them, not only by Nature, but by Grace; not only by Blood, but by spiritual Adoption; not only as they are Men, but as they are Christians; and so are under more Obligations to do good unto them, than we are, or can be to do good to others, who are not Christians.

IV. The Time and Season of performing this Duty, and that is, *As we have Opportunity*. Opportunity is the most proper time for Action; it is the fittest Season of doing those things which we are to do, in the best Manner, and to the best Advantage. And now, Can we ever want Opportunities of *Doing Good*, while we live in this World? For has not Christ assured us, *That we shall always have the Poor with us*? And are not the Poor proper Objects of our Beneficence and Well-doing? And every time we meet with or hear of any of them, are not we presented with an Opportunity of *Doing Good*, if we have but Abilities to do so? And are any Poor more proper, more moving Objects of your Charity, than these poor Boys and Girls, who are here before you; for whose sakes the Charity SCHOOLS are erected, and for whose sakes this Anniversary SERMON is preach'd? For are they not utterly disabled of themselves to help themselves, and in perfect want of every thing, which is necessary to provide for their Maintenance and their Education? Can you ever then Place your Charity upon more deserving Objects, or imploy it to more excellent Purposes, than by Contributing some Part of your Abundance and Superfluities for their necessary Subsistence, and useful Education? And that I may more effectually move and perswade you to this great and noble Work of Beneficence, I will consider these Boys and Girls.

1st. As they are Children.

2^d. As they are poor Children.

3^d. As they are poor Christian Children.

4th. I will consider the extensive Nature of this sort of Charity, and the excellent Fruitfulness of it in those manifold and various good Effects, of which it is productive.

1st. I will consider them as Children. And that they are truly such, every one must own, who knows the different Stages of human Life, and the meaning of those several Words, which are us'd to distinguish them from one another; such as Infancy, Childhood, Youth, Manhood, &c. And as I believe, none are admitted into these Charity-Schools, but who are within the Age of Childhood; so I believe, very few are suffer'd to continue in them after they have pass'd that Period of Time, and never, but upon wise and charitable Considerations.

And here give me leave to Observe, That this Age of Childhood is the most proper Season to put Boys and Girls to honest Labour, and train them up in useful Industry and Employments: For it may very well be suppos'd, that as yet, they have contracted no lazy Habits, no slothful Customs, which may have created in them any great Unwillingness and Aversion to Labour: And therefore, it may easily be suppos'd, that they will readily submit to any Labour and Business, if it be but moderate, and proportion'd to the Strength of their Bodies, and the Capacities of their Understandings: And when they have once been us'd and accusom'd to it, they will take Pleasure and Delight in it, and their Delight, as well as their Strength and Skill, will increase with their Years, and thereby they will every Year be more fit and more dispos'd for more difficult Tasks and Employments. Besides, this Age of Childhood is the fittest Time to Cultivate and Form both their Minds and their Manners; for in this time, their Understandings lie open to Truth, the most useful, necessary Truth, and readily give it an Admission, when it is offer'd to them; for they have imbib'd no false Principles, no dangerous Errors, or at least none in which they are confirm'd, which may obstruct its Passage into them, or make its access to them hard and difficult.

No, their Understandings are as so many *Rasa Tabulae*, or like blank Paper, susceptible of any Impressions, and whereon you may write, with as much facility, the noble and beautiful Characters of profitable and saving Truth, as the ugly and de-

formed Blurs and Blots of pernicious and destructive Errors. Their Wills also, which are the active and operative Faculties in them, are flexible and pliant, and easily capable of having a Religious and Vertuous Bias clapt upon them, and of being bent and determin'd, to every thing which is Good and Holy. Their Affections also, (which are the Wings of the Soul, and carry it with speed and swiftness in the Prosecution of its Aims and Designs) are cool and temperate, guidable and governable, and may be plac'd upon their proper Objects, without any great Struggle and Contest, and that too in their just Degrees and due Measures.

So that from hence you cannot but discern the Advantages and Blessings of a Religious and Vertuous Education in the Days of our Childhood; and how it must, if any thing can, secure us, not only against Apostacy, Heresy and Schism, but also against all manner of Vice and Wickedness whatsoever: For the Impressions of it are most deep and lasting, and the good Principles, which we then imbibe, are like some Liquors poured into New Vessels, which become so incorporated with them, that it is difficult ever to free them from that natural Taste and Smell, which those Liquors have given them. But to return from this Digression, if upon this Occasion it may be call'd a Digression.

Now, Can we consider them as Children, and not be sensible of a Tendernefs and Love which we have for them? For this is a natural Passion, and there is no Man, but must feel the Motions and Workings of it in his Mind; who has not put off his very human Nature, and sunk himself into the very depth of a cruel, and barbarous hard Heartedness. And accordingly it is observ'd, That those Men or Women, who have no Care, no Tendernefs for Children, but instead of Love, shew an Aversion for them, are the most Churlish, Cruel, and worst natur'd People in the World.

But our Blessed Saviour, who was all Sweetness of Temper, and Benignity of Nature, and the perfect Pattern of all that is Good and Charitable, was powerfully affected with the internal Sence of this good-natur'd Passion, and evidently shew'd it both by his Words and Actions; for when they were bringing little Children to Christ, and his Disciples would have hindred those that brought them; he checks them for it, and Commands them to suffer little Children to come unto him, and forbid them not: And he gives this Reason for it, *For of such*

is the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 19. 14. (i. e.) Of such Children, or of such Men, who are become like little Children in their Freedom from all erroneous Prejudices, and sinful Prepossessions, and like unto them in their Love and Meekness, Humility, and Purity of Mind, &c. And when they were come unto him, he gave them all the Marks and Signs of a distinguishing Love and Affection, which he had for them; for he took them up in his Arms, put his Hands upon them, and Blessed them. And let not any one think, that all this kind Behaviour, which our Blessed Saviour used towards little Children, was only the Effect of a blind and unaccountable Instinct; but rather let us look upon it as the Effect of a Passion, which is founded in Nature and Reason: For very good Reasons, I think, there are, why we should be thus kindly affected towards Children, and treat them with all the Appearances of Good-will, and all the Testimonies of Love unfeigned. And this will appear, if we consider,

1st, The Weakness and Infirmities both of their Minds and Bodies, which inseparably attend their tender Years; and which wholly, or in a great Measure at least disable them for doing any good for themselves without the Care, Direction, and Assistance of others.

2^{ly}. If we consider the Innocency and Harmlessness of their Minds, and those other taking and charming Qualities, which beautifie and adorn them; we cannot but be mov'd and excited to have a tender Love, and a sincere Good-will towards them.

3^{ly}. The growing and promising hopes which they give us, of their being hereafter useful Instruments in their Generation, and profitable Members both in Church and State; cannot but endear them to us, and kindle in us a very sensible and affecting Passion for them.

So that you see, we may account for that Tendernefs and Love, which People generally have for Children, from Motives and Arguments taken from Reason, without calling in to our assistance the Motions and Impulses of blind and undecerning Instinct. The Holy Angels, who are unbodied Spirits, and are free from all Concretion of Matter, in which all Instincts are founded, shew a mighty tender love and concern for Children by taking Care of them, Presiding and Watching over them for Good: And this they do, not from blind Instinct, but from a rational Love; not merely in Obedience to the Positive Commands of God, but in Conformity to their own most

loving and compassionate Nature; for they excell in Goodness as well as in Strength. And that the Blessed Angels do take care of little Children, is plain from what our Saviour saith unto his Disciples; for he thus Cautions them, *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little Ones; for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father, which is in Heaven*, Mat. 18. 10. Where by their Angels are meant, those Angels who are their Guardians and Protectors: And its plain, that these Angels are of the highest Rank and Order; for they are the Angels of God's Presence, the Favourites of God, the next unto him in Dignity and Honour; for, this is the meaning of their always beholding the Face of their Father in Heaven. And this, by the way, does teach us, that, then we imitate the Nature, and perform the Office, of Angels to little Children, when we take them into our Care and Protection, and do them such Good, as they are not capable of doing for themselves: Then we become a kind of Ministring Spirits; yea, a sort of inferior and subordinate Saviours to them. And this brings me to consider

2ly. These Boys and Girls as poor Children. Now there is no more reason to doubt of their being Poor, than there is reason to doubt of their being Children. For, some of them have no Parents to take care of, and support, them; and those of them who have Parents, have only such, as are not able to Maintain and Educate them; So that, they must necessarily be Poor, if the want of every thing, which is necessary to Life, can truly denominate them so.

And as they are Poor, so they are the Best Sort of Poor, and the most worthy of our Pity and Assistance: For, they are properly God's Poor: For, they are not Poor by a wilful Choice, but by an unavoidable necessity: They are not Poor by their Vices, but by the Providence of God. Their Parents indeed, or some of them at least, might bring this Poverty upon some of them, by their Personal Follies and Wickedness; but that is not their Fault, but their Misfortune: For, it was no more in their power to prevent their Poverty, than it was in their power to prevent their coming from such Parents, or their being born into the World. No, their Poverty is an Hereditary Poverty, and if it be a Fault, it must lie upon their Parents, who must answer for it; but the Children are no more accountable for it, than they would have been for an Hereditary Disease, if any such had been derived unto them from their Parents.

rents. And therefore, seeing these Children are both Poor, and innocently Poor, we cannot but look upon them, as the most proper Objects of our Charity, and most deserving of our Help and Succour.

Indeed, There are a sort of Poor, who have no Claim, no Title to our Charity, such as those, who spend all their Time in sloth and idleness at home, or in stroling and wandering all about the Streets, or the Country, for the sake of Begging, or for the sake of worse Intentions. Now the Apostle enjoines, That such Poor, because they will not work, neither should they eat, *2 Theff. 3. 10.* And indeed its plain, That such Poor deserve rather a Whipping-Post, than any seasonable Relief, and an House of Correction rather than an Alms-House: For they are the intolerable Burdens and Plagues of the Nation, wherein they live; and instead of doing any Good, do a great deal of Michief in it.

But there lies no such Objection, nor indeed any Objection at all, against these poor Children; but, they bring along with them all the Arguments and Motives for Love and Compassion. For as they are the Objects of our Love, as they are Children, so they are the Objects of our Compassion, as they are Poor Children. And if we had any Pity and Compassion for them, we could no more refuse to help them, than we could refuse to help ourselves, when our Case requir'd it, and our Circumstances enabled us to do it: For, Pity is an uneasy and troublesome Passion, because it makes us go a Share in the Calamities of those we love, and in some Measure feel the Evils and Afflictions which we see them suffer: So that the very natural Principle of self-love, will always be ingaging and prompting us to do what we can to relieve those whom we Pity, and to rescue them from the Misfortunes which they are fallen under, and that for our own sakes, as well as theirs whom we Pity; because we can never be at perfect ease, till we have made them so. And therefore those Christians, if they may be call'd Christians, who refuse to enter into this Public Charitable Design, or grow weary of continuing in it, must be devoid of all Natural, as well as Christian Love and Compassion for these poor Children; and consequently must have Hearts as hard as Flints, and as impenetrable as Rocks, from which God deliver them. And this brings me

3ly. To consider them as poor Christian Children. It is the saying of an eminent Christian Writer, That we are born Men,
but,

but made Christians; But how are we made Christians, but by Christian Baptism? This is evident from that general Commission which our Blessed Lord gave to his Apostles, to Disciple all Nations: And how were they to do that, but by Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And accordingly, *St. Paul* tells us, That we are all Baptized into one Body, which Body is Christ's Mystical Body, his Church, *1 Cor. 12. 13.* Now the Household of Faith, and the Church of Christ, are equipollent and convertible Terms, and signifie the same thing; and therefore he, who is admitted into the Society of the one, is admitted into the Communion of the other, and a Domestic of the Household of Faith, is a Member of Christ's Church; for these are not two distinct Societies, but different Words, which mean and signify the one and the self same Body.

And are not then these poor Children parts of the Household of Faith? Were they not made so, when they were made Members of Christ's Church, by their Christian Baptism? And are not we then to have a particular Regard to them in the Distribution and Disposal of our Charity? Are not we to give them the Preference to all others, who either are not of the Household of Faith, or deserve to be Excommunicated out of it for their notorious Vices and Immoralities? Surely, if we were real Christians, and not barely Nominal ones, we should not only think our selves bound to do so, but in Conformity to our Obligations we should actually do so upon all proper Occasions: Nature teacheth us to consider Men only as Men, and upon that account to love and pity the miserable and indigent, and to do good unto them: But the Gospel of Christ teacheth us to consider Christians not only as Men, but as Christians; and so imposeth upon us a new and stronger Obligation to love all Christians with an extraordinary and distinguishing Affection, and to pity and relieve them before all other People, when they shall fall under any pressing and urgent Necessities. And if we were influenced and acted by the Holy Spirit of God, which not only Unites all sincere Christians together, as Members of one Holy Catholic Church, but also to Christ, who is the supreme Head and Governour of it; we should be ready to pity and do good upon all Occasions to poor distressed Christians, not only for their own Sakes, but also for the sake of Christ, who has a tender Compassion for all his afflicted Disciples, for all his suffering Members, whom he has in some Measure con-

sign'd

sign'd over to the Love and Pity, and Care of those their Fellow-Christians, who are able to give them Succour and Assistance under their Difficulties and Necessities. And therefore those pretended Christians, who can look upon the Wants and Miseries of their Fellow-Christians, without feeling any Pity and Compassion for them, or Inclination and Will to do them Good; have no more Love for Christ, than they have for his Members, and consequently have nothing of the Faith and Life, and Spirit of the Gospel in them; but are in the Church, as dead and wither'd Branches are in a Tree, between whom and the sound and living Parts, there is no vital Union and Communications: And therefore, such Christians are like those Branches, good for nothing, but to be cut off, and cast into the Fire. And so I come

Fourthly and Lastly, To consider the extensive Nature of this sort of Charity, and the excellent Fruitfulness of it in those manifold and various Effects, of which it is productive. Every Act of Charity is a good Work, and is profitable to him for whom it is done, and pleasing to God who will reward it: But Acts of Charity are more or less excellent in their kind, as they are more or less extensive in their Influences, and Beneficial in their Effects: That Man's Charity, which is confin'd to one Object, or one Use; is not so Great and Noble, as that Man's Charity, which has respect to many Persons, and to many useful and excellent Ends. And therefore, this sort of Charity, which is the Occasion of this solemn and religious Assembly, and which does so much Good to so many poor Children, and in so many several ways, with respect both to their Souls and Bodies; must vastly Excell all other Charities, which are more limited, both as to the Objects on which they are bestow'd, and to the Uses for which they are given: For surely, That must be the best and most commendable Charity, which does good to the most Poor, and to the most deserving Poor, and in the most useful and several ways of doing Good; and such is this Charity, which we are now considering. For as the Objects of it are many and numerous, so the good Effects of it are so too: For its not a single Charity, but a Complication of Charities; its a Teeming and Pregnant Charity, and Multiplies itself, and Exerts itself in many and various Instances of Good-will and Beneficence.

For its by Vertue of this Charity, that these poor Children have Lodgings and Food, and Raiment provided for them, and

and are brought up in useful and profitable Employments; whereby they will be the better able to provide for themselves when they shall be sent into the World.

It's by Vertue of this Charity, that they are taught to Read and Write, and some little Skill in Arithmetick, which will qualifie them for better Places and Offices, than ignorant and uninstructed Youths will be capable of.

And it's by Vertue of this Charity, that some of these poor Children, when they leave the Schools, are put Apprentices to some honest and profitable Trade; whereby, its to be hop'd, they will be made the better capable, not only to mainain themselves and their respective Families, but also to do good, and give Relief to those who shall stand in need.

Its by Vertue of this Charity, that their Souls as well as their Bodies are taken care of; For here they are instructed in all the fundamental Articles of the Christian Religion, and in all those essential Truths, which are necessary to be known and believ'd, in order to our eternal Salvation: For here they are taught their Catechism, the Church of *England's* Catechism, which contains all necessary Truths, relating to Faith and Practice; and which is the plainest and the best Summary of the indispensable Duties of our common Christianity, which I ever met with. Nay, Here they are taught to practice what they know and believe, by being call'd to Prayers every Morning and Evening in the Families where they live; and upon every Lord's-day, and all Holy-days, to go to Church, that they may join in the publick Devotions, and hear the Holy Scriptures read, and some part of those Scriptures preach'd upon in Sermons.

By Vertue of this Charity, they are kept under a careful and wholesome Discipline: for their Behaviours are narrowly watch'd, and their Conversations strictly observ'd; and if at any time they are found Guilty of any culpable misbehaviour, and blameable irregularity, they are reprov'd, rebuk'd, and admonish'd for it; and when the Case requires it, they are gently Corrected and Chastis'd: And if any proves Obstinate and Incurable under such Chastisements, they are turn'd out of the Schools; as being no longer capable of having any good done to them, and for fear of infecting the rest by their evil and bad Examples. Thus you see how these poor Children are brought up in the Fear and Nuture of the Lord, and have in all Respects a Christian Care and Affection shewn to them.

Now

Now, Can any true sincere Christian consider these things, which, according to my best Information, I have faithfully laid before you, and not highly approve of, and extremely applaud the Wisdom and Goodness of this publick and joint Benefaction? Or can such a Christian be unwilling to come into so good a Work, and to Contribute something of what he can spare from himself and his Family, towards the upholding and carrying it on? I think it impossible to suppose such a thing of such a Christian.

Or, Can any kind and charitable Contributor reflect upon the Blessed Success which this Benefaction meets with, and the many great and good Effects which it visibly produceth, and not feel strong and manly Pleasures springing up in his Mind, from a Sense of his being, in some measure, an happy Instrument in Conjunction with others, of doing so much good to so many poor Christian Children? No, I think this as impossible a Supposition as the former. For, as every such Christian is influenc'd and govern'd by such a powerful Principle of Love and Goodness, as will forcibly put him upon doing Works of Charity upon all proper and suitable Occasions; so the Sense of doing such good Works, cannot but inspire him with very delicious and charming Pleasures; because, by doing such Works, he acts up to the Dignity of his Nature, to the Dictates of right Reason, and to the Principles of our Holy Religion. And as there are great Pleasures, which necessarily result from our Sense of doing Good, as necessarily as Heat issues from Fire, and Light flows from the Sun; so the Pleasures of good Works, vastly exceed all the Pleasures of Sense, on which we dote and are so fond of. For the Pleasures of Sense are gross and dull, and generally go off with the Acts, which produce them; and if those Acts are unlawful and sinful, they leave nothing behind them but shame and remorse, and stinging Reflections. But the Pleasures of Charity are pure and refined, sublime and excellent, resembling the Joys of Heaven, and the Blessedness of Angels, and in some degree the Happiness of God himself; for God is infinitely Happy in himself, because he is all Love and all Goodness.

Besides, the Pleasures of Charity are lasting and abiding, and live in us as long as the Sense of our having done good Works continue in us, and every new Reflection creates a new Pleasure, and every fresh Remembrance of them produceth a fresh satisfaction. And accordingly Tully, that famous Hea-
then

then, both Philosopher and Orator, tells us in his Book *de Senectute*, That nothing gives us so much Comfort and Pleasure in our old Age, as *Conscientia bonorum factorum, vitæque bene actæ*, as the Consciousness of our good Deeds, and a Life well spent; and I do not doubt, but it was with a view of this, as well as of future Recompences, that our Blessed Saviour said, *It is more Blessed to give than to receive*, Acts 20. 35.

But some perhaps will say, That we may talk what we please, and endeavour to persuade People out of their Money and their Senses: For they give Alms as well as their Neighbours, and Contribute to these Charity-Schools as well as others; but they find no such Pleasure in doing it; nay, they find rather uneasiness than delight in it, and therefore are resolv'd to give it over, as a Burden both to their Minds and Estates. I Answer, Perhaps what they say is true, and if it be true, it must be so, for this Reason, *viz.* That the good they do, is done out of a wrong Principle, and for a wrong End: They do good, perhaps, to avoid the Disgrace of an infamous Singularity, or the Reproaches of their Christian Neighbours and Acquaintance, or to gain Popular Applause and Esteem, and to get a Name and Reputation in the World, that they may the better serve their worldly Ends and Interests by it.

Now *doing Good*, merely with such Views and Intentions, is not Charity, but Worldly-mindedness: It is Trade or Traffique, or Merchandice, or any thing rather than Charity: And therefore its no wonder, that such People feel no Pleasure in their *doing Good*, because there is no Charity in what they do. For how is it possible that they should be Bless'd with the Comforts and Satisfaction of Charity, if Charity has no manner of Influence and Operation upon their Minds, even in their best Works, and most beneficent Performances?

And therefore, my Brethren, If we would taste of the Sweets and Consolations of Charity; if we would meet with the Pleasures and Delights, which arise from the sincere Practice of it, let us take Care, not only to do Good, but to do it out of true Christian Principles, and for true Christian Ends; let Charity be both the Mover and Director of it, and give it both its Rise and its Aim. In a Word, Let us not fail to do Good, as we have Power and Opportunity; but let us take care to do it out of love to Christ, and love to our Neighbour, which only can make our good Works truly Christian, and truly Charitable ones.

And

And certain it is, That if we lov'd the Lord Jesus in Sincerity, as we should not omit the *doing Good*, when ever we should meet with an Opportunity: So in our doing it, we should always have an Eye to our Saviour, as well as to our Neighbour; because the doing it is so conformable to his Laws, so agreeable to his Will, and so pleasing and acceptable to himself.

And when we consider, what Christ has done and suffer'd for us, can we chuse but love him? When we reflect upon those Miracles of Goodness, those Wonders of Mercy, which he hath wrought for us, can we deny him the full and intire Possession of our Hearts and Affections? For did not he empty himself of his Glory, that Glory which he had with the Father, before the World was, *John 17. 5.* And did not he cloath himself with our human Nature, and in that Nature take upon him the form of a Servant, that he might deliver us from the dominion and slavery of Sin and Satan, and reinstate us in the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God? Did not he, who was Rich, become Poor for our sakes, that we through his Poverty might be made Rich? *2 Cor. 8. 9.* Did not he, as on this Day, humble himself to death, even the death of the Cross, that he might purchase for us pardon and eternal Life? *Philip. 2. 8.* For that these things were the Ends of his Humiliation and Sufferings, is plain from other numerous Texts of the Holy Scriptures, some of which expressly informs us, That he tasted death for every Man, *Heb. 2. 9.* That in him we have Redemption thro' his Blood, even the Forgiveness of our Sins, *Ephesi. 1. 7.* That he gave his Life a ransom for many (*i. e.*) for all Mankind, *Mat. 20. 28.* That he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works, *Tit. 2. 14.*

And was not Christ, who gave himself for us, God as well as Man, united in one Person, that so his human Nature might make him capable of Bleeding and Dying for us, and his Godhead give value and merit to his human sufferings, and make them a compleat and perfect Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World?

Now, can God give any thing greater than himself? Nay, is it possible for him to give any thing equal to himself, who infinitely Transcends all the Treasures of the Earth, and all the Riches of the whole Creation? And can we then consider the inestimable, invaluable Gift, which Christ, as on this

Day,

Day, bestow'd upon us, and refuse to give or part with any thing for his sake? And tho' it be true, that nothing which we can give, can do him any good, because his Happiness is Essential and Independent, incapable of any Increase or Diminution; yet by giving what we can spare from ourselves, to his poor Disciples, his necessitous Members, we shall do that which will be as pleasing and acceptable to him, as if it was given to himself; for so he tells us, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me, *Mat. 25. 40.* And therefore, my Brethren, If we have any Love; any Gratitude for Christ, who was our greatest and unparall'd Benefactor, or any Love and Compassion for our poor Christian Brethren; let us shew it by *doing Good*, and by Abounding in Works of Mercy and Charity. Let us have a care how we with-draw our charitable Subscriptions, as the manner of some is; lest to save a little superfluous unnecessary Money, we run the hazard of losing our precious and immortal Souls: But instead of Ceasing to do well, let us learn to do Better by Increasing our charitable Contributions, if there should be Occasion for it, and our Circumstances will allow us to do it; that so we may not be found among the Number of those, who repent of their good Works, and (as the Apostle speaks, upon another Occasion) Draw back to the Perdition of their Souls.

In a Word, *Let us not be weary of well-doing; for in due Season we shall reap, if we faint not, Gal. 6. 9.* For God is not unrighteous, that he will forget your Works and Labour, that proceedeth of Love; which Love you have shewed for his Names sake, who have ministred unto the Saints, and yet do Minister, *Heb. 6. 10.*

Consider therefore what has been said, and the Lord give you and me a right understanding in all Things necessary to eternal Salvation: That so we may take care to let our Light so shine before Men, that they may see our good Works, and glorifie our Father, which is in Heaven. Which God grant for Christ Jesus's sake, *To whom, &c.*

F I N I S.